

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 ROME 13542 191639Z

63

ACTION PM-04

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 EB-07 NRC-05

TRSE-00 ERDA-05 COME-00 MC-02 ACDA-07 OMB-01 AID-05

IGA-02 DHA-02 /095 W

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R 191530Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9524

INFO SECDEF WASHDC

JCS WASHDC

USCINCEUR

US MISSION NATO 3522

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CSA

CNO

CSAF

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 13542

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, BE, DA, FR, GW, IT, LU, NL, NO, CS, PA, UY, IN

SUBJECT: TERMINATION OF SELECTED MAAGS

REFS: (A) STATE 201994 DTG 132137Z AUG 76; (B) ROME 13245, DTG

131602Z AUG 76 (NOTAL)

1. THE ANNUAL AUGUST EXODUS OF ROMAN BUREAUCRACY HAS MADE IT DIFFICULT TO QUICKLY INFORM THE GOI AT AN APPROPRIATELY SENSITIVE LEVEL AS INSTRUCTED PARA 4, REF A. INFORMATION WAS CONVEYED TO DEPUTY DIRECTOR NATO OFFICE MFA WHO HAD NOT BEEN INVOLVED IN PREVIOUS DISCUSSIONS AND DISPLAYED ONLY MILD INTEREST. CHARGE' SUBSEQUENTLY WAS ABLE TO MEET WITH VICE DIRECTOR GENERAL POLITICAL AFFAIRS OF MFA WHOSE REACTION WAS PRIMARILY ONE OF SATISFACTION THAT SIMILAR CHANGES WOULD TAKE PLACE IN OTHER
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PAGE 02 ROME 13542 191639Z

ALLIED COUNTRIES. CONCERNED MOD ACTION OFFICER WILL NOT RETURN TO

ROME UNTIL MID-SEPTEMBER. IN HIS ABSENCE WE NOTIFIED DEPUTY DIRECTOR MOD POLICY AND PLANS OFFICE WHO INDICATED HE WOULD MAKE OUR PLANS KNOWN WHERE NECESSARY. TODAY WE REACHED DEFENSE DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF ADMIRAL MAININI WHO CONFIRMED THE MOD'S INTEREST IN USING FUNDS NOW DEVOTED TO SUPPORTING THE MAAG FOR OTHER PRIORITY PURPOSES. HE AGREED, HOWEVER, THAT THERE WOULD LIKELY BE A NEED FOR SOMETHING LIKE A REDUCED MAAG HERE FOR THE NEXT FEW YEARS.

2. AS REPORTED REFTTEL B, THE ISSUE OF THE MAAG HAS PREOCCUPIED THE IMOD AND THE MFA FOR SOME TIME, THOUGH WITH LESS THAN BURNING URGENCY. OF THE TWO ASPECTS TO THE MAAG THAT THE GOI FINDS OBJECTIONABLE, ITS RATHER PATRONIZING NAME AND ITS HIGH COST, THE LATTER IS OBVIOUSLY THE MOST IMPORTANT. WE HAVE NOT USED THE EXPRESSION "TERMINATION" IN OUR INFORMAL NOTIFICATIONS, BECAUSE IT IS A WORD WHICH IMPLIES AN UNQUALIFIED FINALITY THAT IN FACT DOES NOT APPLY IF THERE IS TO BE A CONTINUATION OF A MILITARY PRESENCE AND FUNCTION SIMILAR IN MANY RESPECTS TO THAT OF THE MAAG. WE WOULD EXPECT THAT THERE IS NO WISH IN EITHER STATE OR DEFENSE TO "TERMINATE" THE ACHESON/TARCHIANI AGREEMENT OF JANUARY 27, 1950 UNDER WHICH THE MAAG (NOT SPECIFICALLY IDENTIFIED AS SUCH) HAS OPERATED, UNDER WHICH MAAG PERSONNEL HAVE ENJOYED DIPLOMATIC STATUS, AND UNDER WHICH (ARTICLE IV) THE GOI HAS REIMBURSED THE MAAG'S ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS. AS THE MOD'S PRIMARY INTEREST IS IN SAVING THE COST OF THE MAAG, ARTICLE IV OF THE AGREEMENT MAY BE VULNERABLE TO AMENDMENT. WE URGE THEREFORE THAT ANY FORMAL NOTIFICATION STRESS THE CONTINUUM RATHER THAN THE CHANGE. THE ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS OF THE SMALLER "LIAISON GROUP" WILL BE SIGNIFICANTLY LESS THAN THE BURDEN WE HAVE PREVIOUSLY PLACED ON THE MOD FOR THE SUPPORT OF THE MAAG. IT IS POSSIBLE THEREFORE THAT THE MOD MIGHT AGREE TO CONTINUE COVER THOSE EXPENDITURES. HOWEVER, WE SHOULD BE PREPARED TO NEGOTIATE A LESS COMPREHENSIVE ITALIAN CONTRIBUTION IF THAT SHOULD BECOME NECESSARY. MUCH WILL DEPEND ON THE ITALIAN PERCEPTION OF THE FUNCTION OF THE NEW GROUP AND THE DIRECT BENEFITS IT PROVIDES TO THE MOD.

3. THOUGH THERE WOULD BE NO OBJECTION FROM THE ITALIANS TO CALLING THE NEW ENTITY THE "USEUCOM LIAISON GROUP", THAT TITLE COULD, WE THINK, HAVE SOME IMPACT ON THE ITALIAN VIEW OF CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 ROME 13542 191639Z

ITS MISSION. IT COULD SUGGEST, FOR EXAMPLE, NARROWER RESPONSIBILITIES DIRECTED TO SERVING U.S. NEEDS, AND WEAKER ACCESS TO THE WASHINGTON MILITARY HIERARCHY. IN SUCH CASE THE ITALIANS COULD BE EVEN MORE RELUCTANT TO CONTRIBUTE TO ITS SUPPORT. WE WOULD PREFER, THEREFORE, TO SEE A LESS RESTRICTIVE LABEL APPLIED TO THE MAAG SUCCESSOR. BEAUDRY

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